

Appl. No. : 10/009,851
Filed : November 6, 2001

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on November 13, 2003, the Examiner rejected all pending claims, Claims 34-41 and 48. In the present Amendment and Response to Office Action, Applicants have amended Claims 34 and 48. Applicants have also amended the specification and the drawings. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments and full consideration of the remarks contained herein.

Amendments to the Claims

Applicants have amended the claims to clarify further the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. For example, Applicants have deleted "loading means" from independent Claim 34. Applicants have also deleted "of a set of wafers" from independent Claim 48. As a result of the deletion "of a set of wafers," Applicants have also amended independent Claim 48 to recite "a wafer" or "the wafer" rather "one wafer" or "the one wafer," respectively. Applicants submit that these amendments merely aid to increase the readability of the claims and add no new matter. Consequently, Applicants respectfully that the amendments are fully supported by the Application as originally filed and do not narrow the scope of the claims.

Amendments and Objections to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the title for reciting "METHOD FOR TRANSFERRING WAFERS AND RING" while the claims are directed to apparatus. In response, Applicants have amended the title to recite "APPARATUS FOR TRANSFERRING WAFER AND RING" to more clearly indicate the invention to which the claims are directed. In addition, Applicants have amended the title to recite "WAFER" rather than "WAFERS" to correct an obvious grammatical error, so that the forms of both words match and are singular. In view of these amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the title is overcome.

The Examiner has also objected to the specification for not including an abstract of the disclosure as required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.72(b). Applicants note that an abstract of the disclosure was submitted with the Preliminary Amendment filed November 6, 2001. As a courtesy, Applicants have attached a copy of that submission herewith, in which the last page contains the added abstract, in accordance with amendment format prevailing at the time.

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Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection regarding the abstract of the disclosure is moot.

In addition, Applicants have amended the specification in response to the addition of new Figure 12, discussed below. For example, Applicants have amended the descriptions of the Figures to correct obvious grammatical errors and to provide a general description of new Figure 12. In addition, Applicants have amended the specification to add reference numerals relating to Figure 12. Because the subject of Figure 12 was already in the application as filed and the amendments merely point out the correspondence of features, already present and understood by the skilled artisan in the original specification, with various parts of Figure 12, Applicants submit that no new matter is added and that the amendments are fully supported by the Application as originally filed. *See, e.g.*, Claim 1, as originally filed.

Amendments and Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) for not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the Examiner has stated that the “loading chamber” and “loading means” of Claim 34 must be shown or the features must be cancelled from the claim. The Examiner has further stated that a “robot” and a “set of wafers” have not been depicted. The Examiner has also required that a new drawing illustrating the subject matter of the invention be provided under 37 C.F.R. § 1.81.

Applicants note that “loading means” has been deleted from independent Claim 34 and that “set of wafers” has been deleted from independent Claim 48. Consequently, Applicants submit that the objections with respect to “loading means” and “set of wafers” are moot.

As suggested by the Examiner, Applicants have also furnished a new drawing as Figure 12, which is attached herewith. New Figure 12 more clearly illustrates the relationship between the various features that are the subject of the invention, including the “loading chamber” 120 and the “robot” 50. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to the drawings are overcome.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

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The Examiner has rejected Claims 34-41 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as “containing subject matter which was not described in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains ... to make and/or use the invention. The applicant’s preferred embodiment, i.e. the best mode, of the ‘loading chamber’, ‘loading means’ and ‘robot’ has not been disclosed.”

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims and specification, as amended herewith, overcome the rejections.

Initially, Applicants note that “loading means” has been deleted from independent Claim 34 and, consequently, that the rejections stemming from recitation of that term are moot.

With respect to the “loading chamber” and the “robot,” Applicants note that these features, including their functionality and interrelationship, have been more clearly indicated by new Figure 12, along with the related description of that figure. For example, as illustrated in Figure 12, Applicants note that the “loading chamber” is simply a volume proximate the reactor in which a ring is combined with a wafer, as would be understood by the skilled artisan from the original application. Similarly, as also illustrated in Figure 12, the “robot” is simply a robot that is able to hold the ring and is capable of transporting the ring from the “loading chamber” to the treatment chamber of the reactor. Applicants submit that this functionality serves to define and delineate these features. *See, e.g.*, Figure 12 and the amended paragraph beginning at page 3, line 10 and originally filed Claim 1.

Moreover, given these functional limitations, Applicants submit further details are unnecessary, as the functional requirements outlined in the specification and figures clearly identify particular classes of robots and loading chambers known to the skilled artisan. Given that these classes of features are well-known to the skilled artisan, Applicants submit that further description is unnecessary. *See In re Buchner*, 929 F.2d 660, 18 U.S.P.Q.2d 1331 (Fed. Cir. 1991) (the specification need not disclose what is well-known to those skilled in the art and preferably omits that which is well-known to those skilled). Consequently, Applicants submit that the discussion of the functionality and interrelationship between the various recited features, including “loading chamber” and “robot,” in the specification and figures serve to sufficiently delineate these features, as Applicants have envisioned and claimed them.

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Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of independent Claims 34 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph are overcome. As such, Applicants also submit that the rejections of dependent Claims 34-41 are also overcome.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request entry of the amendments and submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request the same. If some issue remains which the Examiner feels may be addressed by Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned for authorization.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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By: Adeel S. Akhtar

Adeel S. Akhtar
Registration No. 41,394
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(415) 954-4114

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